

**Testimony of Energy Solutions, Robert Auer
Before the Energy & Technology Committee**

In Support of
**HOUSE BILL 5385, AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY RETROFITS
FOR CERTAIN BUILDINGS AND THE DISCLOSURE OF THE
ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF CERTAIN BUILDINGS**

Submitted by
Robert Auer, President
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Senator Fonfara, Representative Nardello, and members of the Committee,

Energy Solutions is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on House Bill 5385, AAC Energy Retrofits for Certain Buildings and the Disclosure of the Energy Efficiency of Certain Buildings.

I support this bill, which directs the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to establish a program for providing prospective homebuyers and apartment tenants with information about the energy efficiency performance of homes they are considering. House sellers would get an energy audit of their property done (at which time the auditing company would also provide suggestions for cost-effective improvements to the property), and landlords would provide prospective tenants with recent utility bills. This legislation also creates an energy benchmarking program for large commercial buildings, under which building managers can use a simple online tool to track efficiency performance over time.

I have made the improvements to my home since I purchased it in 2009 by installing new energy efficient windows, and by sealing the air leaks and adding insulation in my attic to bring my R factor rating up to where it should be, by code. We are so happy we made this decision because it has added a tremendous amount of comfort to our daily lives.

Personally we would like to make the investment of a new heat pump for the office, but the landlord does not feel obligated to contribute monetarily, even though it would improve the value of his building. The regulations of the proposed House Bill 5385 would make him more likely to do so.

As I think about how quickly time passes, and how little effort we are putting into trying to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it saddens me that we have not tried to stem the wasted pollution decades earlier.

I have seen many larger office buildings which could use the assistance of energy efficiency, and who don't make good decisions about putting an action plan into effect. I think this Bill will help them to make the decisions to improve their buildings, and it will be in their own interest. Hopefully this will end up meaning more business for our company as a result, which will mean the hiring of additional staff.

My reason for getting into this business 21 years ago was the dirty and disgusting looking skyline that had developed while traveling I-95 each and everyday over the decades since the 1970's. This House Bill 5385 will be instrumental in meeting the state's greenhouse gas obligations under the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act (Public Act 08-98).

Increasing demand for energy audits and retrofit services will have a positive effect on Connecticut's economy, and our company directly. We have the need for more staff, but have to take a conservative

approach to growth due to the uncertainty of the program funding, and how they will be administered.

The commercial building benchmarking program will help to strengthen our direct marketing to building managers. Mandatory building energy rating is a proven program, already working in California, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, and New Mexico, in cities like New York City, and Washington, D.C.

There are two main advantages to having the residential disclosure be mandatory, rather than voluntary: one is that only **a mandatory program will turn efficiency into a major market force** and properly reward building owners who have invested in efficiency; the other is that **a mandatory program serves a consumer protection function** by ensuring that prospective tenants and homebuyers who are not well-versed in building energy efficiency will have the same access to information as well-informed customers, so landlords and sellers cannot pawn off an inefficient home on a disadvantaged renter/buyer.

Please support HB 5385 for the cost savings it offers Connecticut residents, the benefits to our air quality, and the additional economic activity and jobs it will generate in the efficiency and energy services sector.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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